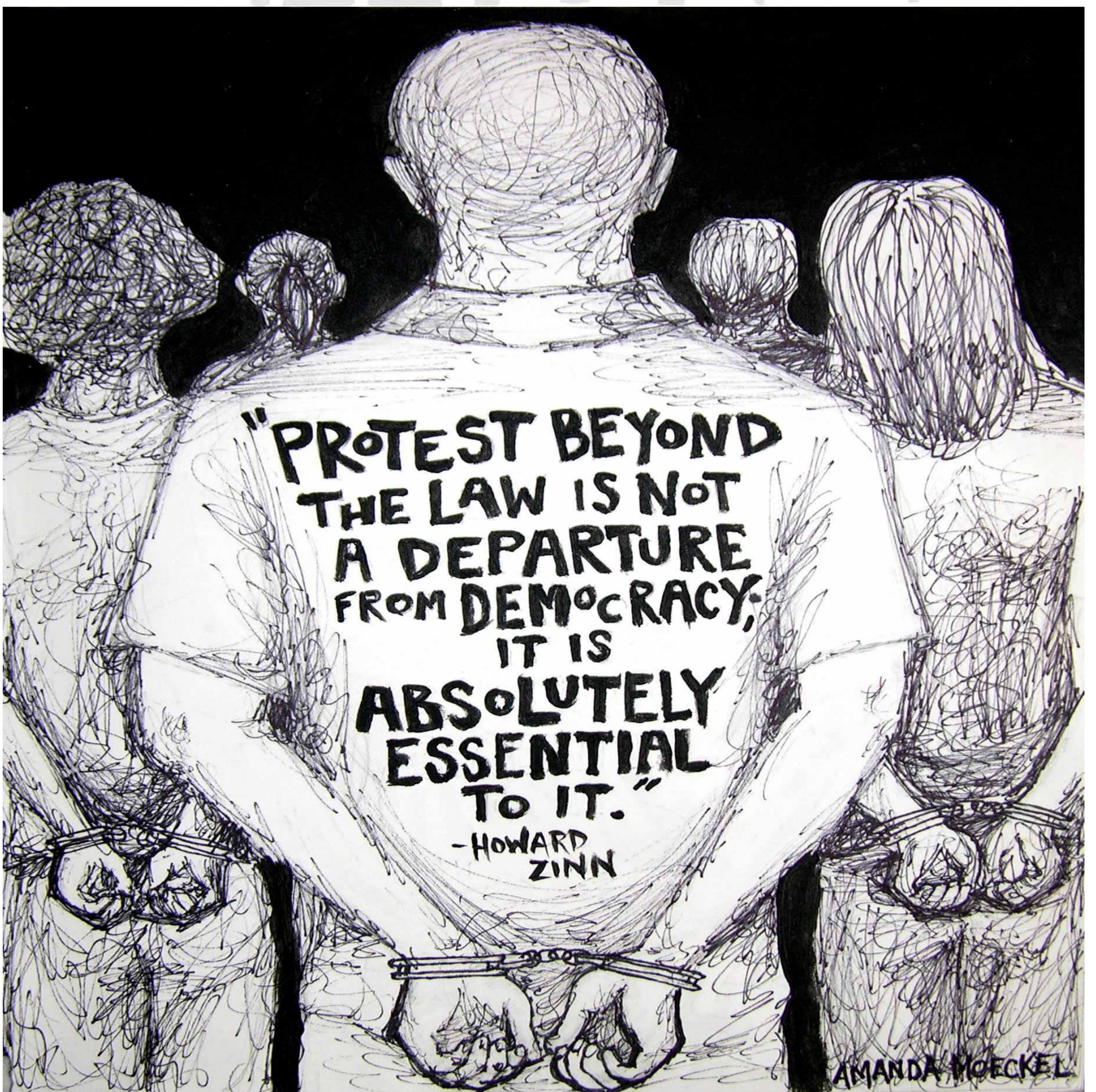


# via. paciS

September 2007 Vol.31 No.3

—The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community —



Page 1—DM HS Students Occupy Senator's Office and Invite to DM to do Nonviolent Resistance before IA Caucuses. Page 4—Five DM activists Acquitted in Jury Trial for Trespass in Sen. Grassley's Office



# via. paciS

The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

September  
2007

Vol. 31, NO 3



**Students Occupying Senator Grassley's DM Office:**

(L to R) Amanda Hicks - Hoover HS, Emily Sorensen - Roosevelt HS, (behind Emily is Kelsey Williamson - Roosevelt HS), Nate Looker - Dowling HS, Aaron Glynn - Hoover HS, Dave Kelly - Dowling HS, Reetzi Hughes - Roosevelt HS, Abby Olson - Dowling HS, (between Abby and Jenny is Aaron Hays - Dowling HS), with the book is Jenny Sloma - Dowling HS, back of her head Frankie Hughes - Edmunds Elementary. Not in photo, Drew Dawmueller - Roosevelt HS.

## HS Students Occupy Senator Chuck Grassley's DM Office, Six Arrested

By Michael Gillespie

A group of Iowa high school students brought a fresh, youthful perspective to the Iowa anti-war movement when they occupied the Des Moines office of Republican Senator Chuck Grassley (R) for about three hours on Friday, September 21.

Aaron Glynn, 18, Hoover High School (HHS); Amanda Hicks, 17, HHS; Reetzi Hughes, 14, Roosevelt High School (RHS); and Abby Olson, 17, of Dowling Catholic High School (DCHS) were arrested, along with two of their adult supporters, Frank Cordaro, 56, DCHS '69, of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community and Renee Espeland, 46, mother of Reetzi and Frankie Hughes and Coordinator of the Iowa Peace Network, after they refused to leave the Senator's office when it closed at the end of the workday.

A group of some 15 Des Moines area students visited the office in the Des Moines Federal Building in the hope of talking with the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee to urge him to end his support for the war in Iraq. They were accompanied by more than a dozen adult supporters.

"I'm here to make it known that I think the war is wrong, and I want Senator Grassley to stop voting to fund the war," said Reetzi

Hughes. Hughes said it was not her first anti-war protest and though she had not been arrested before, she felt good about it.

"Lots of kids are against the war," said Hughes. Emily Sorensen, 17, RHS, read a statement prepared by the group and addressed to Grassley: "[We] urgently request that you stop funding the war in Iraq. As Des Moines area high school students we request that you change your position to truly represent the majority of your constituents who oppose this immoral, illegal, and unjust war."

A parent of one of the students said the group had done research on the war to prepare for their visit to the Senator's office.

"They really thought about this," said Abby Olson's mother, Julie Fugenschuh, in a telephone interview Friday night.

"They're not a bunch of hot-heads. All the parents should be very proud of them," said Fugenschuh.

Soon after the students arrived, a Grassley staffer said the Senator was traveling and could not be reached by phone.

As the students waited, hoping Grassley would agree to engage in conversation with them by phone, they sat in a circle on the office floor and read from a list of the names of the dead from the Iraq war. Later, they passed around and

read from Thomas Merton's *The Nonviolent Solution*.

Later, Grassley's spokesperson commented on the event:

"It's important for Americans to exercise their Constitutional rights to express their grievances peacefully. And, Senator Grassley hopes the young Iowans who visited his office today received an educational experience. It's important for the young people to know that Senator Grassley does not take lightly his position on the War on Terrorism. He has met with Iowans on both sides of the issue, including members of the Iowa National Guard who have been in Iraq. Senator Grassley is looking for the best way possible to draw down the U.S. commitment as quickly as possible while also looking out for U.S. interests and security in the long term," said Grassley's Press Secretary Beth Levine.

Friday's occupation of Grassley's office was part of the Voices for Creative Nonviolence National Occupation Project and the Iowa Occupation Project. The students are members of the Des Moines based Students Beyond War, a group that meets weekly at the American Friends Service Committee's Des Moines office.

Grassley's staff responded with polite professionalism when interacting with those present during the most recent occupation, as did

security personnel, despite the presence of as many as 30 students, their adult supporters, and media personnel in the reception area of the Senator's office and adjacent hallway.

When four of the students and their two adult supporters declined to leave the office at 5 p.m. a Federal Protective Service officer summoned Des Moines Police officers, who privately interviewed the juveniles among the group before placing the six under arrest. The three adults were charged with misdemeanor criminal trespass. The three juveniles were also charged with misdemeanor criminal trespass but will be processed through the juvenile court system. All were released within the hour.

All of the students and adults who took an active role in the occupation attended a mandatory nonviolence training workshop the night before. The workshop included an overview of the theory, history, and practice of non-violence and civil resistance. Topics included basic concepts, assets of non-violent resistance, communications as integral to non-violent resistance, humor works, the question of effectiveness, non-violent "revolution of values", and why risk going to jail?

The Voices for Creative Non-Violence Occupation Project began on February 5, 2007 and continues in Iowa and other states.

## Seasons of Discontent: A Presidential Occupation Project (SODaPOP)

By Jeff Leys and Brian Terrell

An invite to do nonviolent civil resistance during the presidential campaign begins with nonviolent occupations of candidates' headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, on November 8.

Hi Ho. Hi Ho. It's off to Washington, D.C. we go for another demonstration at the seat of power.

But hold on a minute. This fall and winter, the road to the seat of power goes through Iowa with its first in the nation presidential caucus.

Let's journey to Iowa together to bring nonviolent civil resistance and civil disobedience to the campaign offices and headquarters of presidential candidates—both Republican and Democrat—who do not publicly pledge to take the necessary concrete steps to end the Iraq war, to rebuild Iraq, to forswear military attacks on other countries, and to fully fund the Common Good in the U.S.

Join this campaign: SODaPOP—Seasons of Discontent: A Presidential Occupation Project.

Iowa will be the first stage in this campaign. We invite you to join us in Iowa and then to bring the campaign home with you to your home states as the Presidential election season moves forward.

### An Invitation to Iowa

Voices for Creative Nonviolence and our allies in Iowa are in the initial stages of organizing a campaign of nonviolent civil resistance focused upon those who would be President.

This fall and early winter, Republican and Democratic candidates are swarming Iowa in preparation for the "First in the Nation!" 2008 caucuses. Campaign headquarters are established in cities and towns across the state and candidates are showing up at public events large and small, shaking hands, jockeying for photo ops kissing babies and pigs. The national and international press will be here in force. Representatives of unions, industry and other interest groups from around the nation are gathering, not only to influence the results of the caucus but also to take advantage of the extraordinary access to the candidates the caucus provides, and to draw attention to their issues and causes as the world's attention is focused on the state.

Seasons of Discontent: A Presidential Occupation Project (SODaPOP) will launch on November 7, introducing nonviolent direct action against the war in Iraq into the presidential election process. Activists from around the nation are encouraged to journey to Iowa to "occupy" the Iowa campaign headquarters of presidential candidates who have not pledged to initiate a complete withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq. Such candidates might also be challenged as they make public appearances around the state without regard for arbitrary "free speech zone" restrictions that may be established by candidates, parties, police or the Secret Service.

While SODaPOP will launch in early November, we are organizing intensive and extensive actions in Iowa in the weeks immediately preceding the Iowa caucus. The Iowa caucus is currently scheduled for January 14, though it is somewhat fluid as of now. (The date may change since South Carolina Republicans moved up the date of their caucus.)

Whether the caucuses are earlier or later, we are inviting "affinity groups" from around the country to start organizing a trip to Iowa in the coming months with special attention to the two weeks immediately prior to the caucuses. Please make it if you can to Iowa for the SODaPOP "kick off" in Des Moines on the evening of Wednesday, November 7 followed by the first occupations of campaign headquarters on the next day, Thursday, November 8. We hope to make our witness for peace with nonviolent direct action at the offices of several of the candidates who would prolong the war in Iraq on that day.

Continued on page 4

**Invite to join Students Beyond War:** Through nonviolence, high school students engaged in education, theory, and action. Students Beyond War was formed to give a youth face to the peace movement and show that peacemaking is an accessible and realistic way of life. Our hope is to recruit members from all over the city. We still lack members from Lincoln, East, and North. We are planning to be involved in the October 27 memorial service and peace demonstration. We meet every Thursday night at 7 p.m. at the AFSC House, 42<sup>nd</sup> and Grand, DM. For more info contact: Nate Looker, ph (515) 229-2087, e-mail <skierguy7@hotmail.com>



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## Who We Are

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition. We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a day time drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, a shower or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that foster social justice.

### Our mailing address is:

P O Box 4551  
Des Moines IA 50305

## Houses & Community

### Bishop Dingman House

1310 7<sup>th</sup> St 515 243-0765

Residents: Frank Cordaro, Mohamed Elkhandagawi, Mona Shaw and Matthew "Arlo" Gesner

### Msgr. Ligutti House

1301 8<sup>th</sup> St 515 280-1216

Residents: Jackie Robinson, Ed Bloomer, Norman Searah, Bill and Jack Petsche

### Lazarus House

1317 8<sup>th</sup> St 515 246-1499

Residents: Carla, Jordan Dawson, John Tuzcu & Irving Schroeder

### Phil Berrigan House

713 Indiana Ave 515 282-4781

Residents: Jacob Olsen, Mike and Fran Fuller

## The Chiapas Project

Chiapas Mexico

Richard Flamer

[flamerrichard@hotmail.com](mailto:flamerrichard@hotmail.com)

## Subscriptions

FREE. To subscribe: mail, phone or e mail your name and address to [frank.cordaro@gmail.com](mailto:frank.cordaro@gmail.com).

Published four times yearly. All photos taken by DMCW members unless otherwise noted.

## 2007 Sugar Creek Midwest CW Gathering



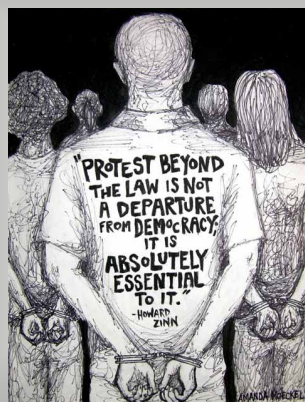
### 2007 Sugar Creek Midwest CW Gathering Group Photo

This year's gathering of the Midwest Cwer at Sugar Creek IA was a great success. Over 150 people representing 32 communities from 14 states showed up for the largest gathering in memory. The communities represented were: Athens CW, Athens GA, DMCW, Des Moines IA, Strangers and Guests CW, Maloy IA, St Francis CW, Chicago IL, Su Casa CW, Chicago IL, St Jude CW, Campaign IL, Claire CW, Bloomington IL, Quad cities CW, Rock Island IL, Peoria CW, Peoria IL, Marseilles CW, Marseilles IL, St Peter Claver CW, South Bend IN, Shalom CW, Kansas City KS, Worcester CW, Worcester MA, Kalamazoo CW, Kalamazoo MI, Jeannie Collier CW, Saginaw MI, Dorothy Day CW, Detroit MI, Holy Family CW, KS MO, Cherth Brook CW, KS MO, Columbia CW, Columbia MO, St Louis CW, St Louis MO, Winona CW, Winona MN, Duluth CW, Duluth MN, Saint Paul CW, Saint Paul MN, Round River CW, Finland MN, Stevensville CW, Stevensville MT, Omaha CW, Omaha NE, Cleveland CW, Cleveland OH, Emmaus CW, Yankton SD, Anathoth CW, Luck WI, Casa Maria CW, Milwaukee WI, Waukesha CW, Waukesha WI, St Francis CW, Oxford WI

### 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest CW Resistance Retreat set for KS MO

The 2008 Midwest CW Resistance Retreat will be held in Kansas City MO. The focus of the retreat will be USA immigration policies. The retreat will be hosted by the combined efforts of the three KS area CW communities; Holy Family CW, Cherth Brook CW in KS MO and Shalom CW in KC KS. The date is yet to be determined. Stay tuned. (Previous CW Resistance Retreats: 2003 – St Louis MO, 2004 – Minneapolis MN, 2005- Omaha NE, 2006- Columbia MO, 2007 – South Bend IN)

## Editor's Notes



### About the Cover:

The art on our cover came to my attention last spring when David Goodner posted it online to promote a demonstration held in Iowa City. The resolution of the graphic that David posted was too low to reproduce in the *via pacis*. Nor, did David know the name of its artist, or, for that matter, any information about it. It took me several months of investigating to find the artist and the history for this wonderful illustration. The artist's name is Amanda Moeckel. Amada lives in San Francisco, and her web page is [myanimalart.com](http://myanimalart.com). She drew the illustration in 1989 while working for the National Conference on Civil Disobedience. [[organizedresistance.org/2000](http://organizedresistance.org/2000)]

Thanks, Amanda, for sending us your work and giving us permission to us it.

### About this issue:

While our nation is at war, we peace-makers are at war with war. It has been the case for more than four years now that the pages of the *v.p.* have been dominated by our efforts to make peace in these warring times. And, there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel. This fall and winter the DMCW community are entering a new phase in our peace-making efforts. We are one of the co-sponsors for the SODaPOP campaign (see page 1), and we will be hosting people from across the U.S. who will travel to Iowa to do nonviolent civil resistance and civil disobedience at the campaign offices and headquarters of presidential candidates prior to the Iowa caucuses. That means we will be doing double-duty: maintaining the daily hospitality to the people we serve at Dingman House and offering hospitality to peace makers from all over the country. We welcome any help we can get during these critical months to accomplish this challenge.

### Join Us at our Two Weekly Vigils in the DM area:

Wednesdays: 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
US MEPS in WDM—25th and University Ave, WDM  
Thursdays: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Nollen Plaza, downtown DM—2nd Ave and Locust

"The greatest challenge of the day is how to bring about a revolution of the heart, a revolution which has to start with each one of us."  
-Dorothy Day



[www.desmoinescatholicworker.org](http://www.desmoinescatholicworker.org)

### New, Improved Website

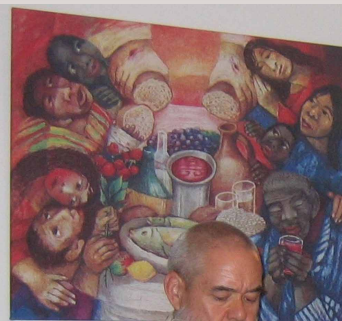
The DMCW has upgraded our website. The revised site not only has a new look but has been redesigned to make it more interactive, informative and timely. Features are being added that will provide late breaking news about DMCW activities and events affecting our work. Critical donation needs of those we serve will be updated frequently. We will add archive and resource sections soon as well as biographical information about members of our community. There will also be a recommended reading section that will link to the full text of essays, letters, and other articles written by members of our community.

Our social justice and peace activities

section will be expanded to keep you up-to-date on the many activities in which we will be engaging in the next several months. You can expect that our participation in scheduled actions by the Iowa Occupation Project and SODaPOP will be updated daily as things on the peace front become more intense. We will share behind-the-scenes information about these actions that you may not read anywhere else. The site is now being designed and maintained by Mona Shaw, long-time Iowa human rights activist who recently joined our community.

Please visit our site and visit often. We welcome any suggestion you may have to make the site more helpful to you.

**Lectionary Bible Study Every Monday**  
7 p.m. at  
**Berrigan House**  
713 Indiana Avenue  
All are welcome!  
Call 282-4781 to confirm



**Every Friday evening you are invited to Mass or Scripture Service**  
7:30 p.m.  
**Dingman House**  
1310 7th St  
All are welcome!



Fr Richard Cleaver celebrates an Eastern Orthodox Mass every 1st Fri.



Community News

— By Carla Dawson, DMCW

Hi everyone. I'm pretty much down to the last minute to write my community article, but not quite.

I hate to start my article out with sad news. Recently we had three members leave our community. Bob Zellmer has moved down to the Salvation Army program, Steve Steeples is now in Eastern Iowa, and Mike McHugh is in Saudi Arabia. We wish them luck in the future and hope they learned as much from our community as we learned from them. It is not easy to live in community and it is not for everyone, if it was, we would be a much better society.

The good news is we have three new people joining our community. We would like to welcome Mona Shaw, Arlo Gesner and John Tuzcu to our community. They are learning it is a challenge to live with strangers. And some strangers, like we DMCWers are stranger than most. We are all learning to adjust to living with our new people. I am so excited to have new community members. It is like when someone in your family gets married or when you have a new brother or sister. We are all hoping and praying for a long and happy relationship.

This summer we have been plagued by one problem after another. In July we were given a cease and desist letter from the city zoning department for the hospitality we do at Dingman House. As a Catholic Worker community we know we are called by a higher power than the city of Des Moines, so we knew we were not going to close down. Instead, we got ourselves a good lawyer, had to jump through a few hoops and we are getting ourselves a "legal non-conforming use designation for the Dingman House (whatever that means?) Right now we are still open for the business of the Works of Mercy! Thank you Dan Manning and the Connolly O'Malley Lillis Hansen Olson LLP DM Law Firm (whoever they are.) . We hope we have heard enough from the city for a while. Keep us in your prayers that the works we do will be left alone by the powers at city hall.

Now on to the community and what's going on with us. Fran has been busy with IPN and her Spanish class. She went on a small trip to South Dakota. She had a great time, even if she didn't get to sleep in a teepee.

Mike is fairing very well after the slight stroke he had in July. He has quit smoking and only has slight vision problems. He is back to work at Kum and Go. He has a new partner for Scrabble. Please keep him and his health in your prayers.

Frank has been busy going to trial in Colorado, working on the Iowa Occupation Project and planning actions in Omaha related to STRATCom. He

recently spoke at DM Area Community College (DMACC) and will speak at Grandview and Simpson Colleges soon. He has traveled a lot this past summer and is in great health.

Jacob has been working on this new Via Pacis. He is back in school full time at DMACC. He has been aided by the expertise of Mona on the DMCW web page. If you haven't been to the web page lately you should check it out. It was exciting to see all the things that have been updated and changed. Mona rocks!

Eddie is still going to both weekly vigils in Des Moines and he has started taking a class at DMACC. Eddie is an ideal student. He still works Mondays at Home Recycling and he loves doing that. He is as busy as anyone we know.

Bill has been very busy helping his son Jack. Jack recently passed his GED and expects to start taking classes at DMACC. Way to go Jack. Bill has found a new juggling buddy. He is always looking for work, so keep him in mind if you find someone looking to hire anyone for yard work and house cleaning.

Norman is visiting his mother and family in Worchester MA. This is a big deal for Norm. He has not seen his mother for several years. We all hope they have a wonderful visit!

Jackie took a much needed break to Indiana in July. It was great for her to get away. She is now back working at the Drake Student Health Clinic full time and is meeting all the new students. She is glad to be back into her regular routine.

Mohammad continues to humble us. As the only Muslim in our community, Mohammad out prays the rest of us all combined! He religiously prays the five times a day Muslims are supposed to pray and this month he is faithfully doing the Ramadan fast. If Mohammad is not with us at Dingman House doing hospitality he is at his local mosque serving the Muslim community of Des Moines. He is truly a gift to us and his fellow DM Muslims.

Joshua and Julius will be leaving our community at the beginning of October to try their way in the big world. It was a decision that has not come lightly to us. I want my sons to realize how good a life they had at the DMCW and really appreciate all the great and wonderful people who helped mold their lives. I do not think they will appreciate what they had here until they get out and see what the rest of the world has to offer. We wish them luck on their new adventure. Keep them in your prayers. Jordan, my youngest is going to school at East and will soon be down at Scavo. He is trying to figure out being sixteen. It has not been an easy time. He spent four weeks on the East



**Bishop Michael Botean and the DMCWers:** (LtoR / top to bottom) Jackie Robinson, Carla Dawson, Bill Petsche, Brian Terrell, Jacob Olson, Bp Botean, Fran Fuller, Jack Petsche, Ed Bloomer, Mohamad Ielkhandagawi, and John Tuzcu. The DMCW was blessed to have the Bishop stay with us while he was in Des Moines.

Coast and had a blast. Thanks Richard and Luke for watching out for him.

I spent eleven days in New York. I had a great time. I spent time at Lake George with the Daloisio's. I also attended the War Resister's meetings. I spent a lot of time walking around with Ted Walker in the city. It is really strange how much the city has changed. Ted came and spent five

days with us in August. It was a very short visit and we can not wait until he comes back for a longer stay. I am back at school full time. I love my classes. I have three more semesters after I finish this one. It seems like time is really flying by.

I hope everyone will have a blessed fall. We pray for a bountiful harvest of justice, peace and love in our fragile

world and for the bumper crops too. We also pray for an end to the Iraq War and an end to the deportation of so many of our sisters and brothers trying to make a life for themselves. We hope that everyone will continue to do their part so we can have a peaceful and loving society. Keep us in your prayers and we will do the same. PEACE,

Norman's Whereabouts:

— By Norman Searah

It's September, and I'm going home to New England for two weeks. I've been quite busy, and I'm thankful for the cane made for me by John Mahoney, Catholic Worker from Spotsylvania, VA.

A movie I saw a while back (that I also loaned to Frank) entitled "The United State vs John Lennon" took me back to when Nixon was President. There was a lot going on then to the end the war in Vietnam-from antiwar songs by Pete Seeger and others to Abbie Hoffman to demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Returning veterans' threw their medals over the fence on the White House grounds, and even Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King spoke out against that war.

Now, we need to end this war. We need to begin talking (and listening) to one another. U.S. leaders should not be the only decision-makers. We need to share more with other countries than music and sports. One planet is a lot like having one body, if we don't take care of the one we have; we don't get another.

I hate war, and I hate profiting from war. I hate any idea that would put weapons in space. If the Earth and Heavens are sacred—as I believe they are—it must be evil to turn them into places of war. We are only guests here, and we have no right to wreck the place during our visit. Regardless of our race and ethnicity or whether we are rich or middle-class or poor, we can show we care in our manners, and respect toward each other and our planet.

I wrote Pope Benedict and told him that Pope Paul once gathered leaders from all the religions of the world in one place to pray for peace. He replied thanking me for my letter, and then I later read that he is indeed now scheduled to speak at the United Nations in New York City next spring. I would like very much to be there, of course. My fingers are crossed that he will speak for the world to know peace. We've known about war long enough. I'll keep you posted if my wish is realized.

I know that the war machine contributes to global warming. I wonder how much of this past summer's violent weather is because of this. In Iowa we've had intense heat and intense storms with nothing in between. I heard stories of flash floods, failed sewer systems, and flooded basements every day. The number of forest fires and tornadoes (including unlikely places like Brooklyn, NY, and England) and worse hurricanes like Hurricane Dean are also bad. Scariest, I think, is news of how quickly the North and South poles are now melting.

Ted Walker visited us after he had been writing in Austria. He said there wasn't much snow in the Alps this year, and the reef is still having trouble.

It's not just our country, but the world that needs our help. We shouldn't just rely on governments to act; we need people helping people.

I remember the Indian in the T.V. ad with the tear in his eye for the trashing of the Earth. Maybe instead of driving alone to work or school or to shop; we can

start carpooling. Maybe you could start a bicycle club at school or work (that could lead to some part-time work fixing bikes). Help your neighbor (even if he doesn't speak English), even if it's just cutting his lawn. (You might just make a friend.) We can learn to be stewards of the land by helping each other, picking up a little trash and teaching others to do the same. I saw a young person on television who had cleaned up part of the Mississippi River, and he reminded me of two others named Adam and Eve who turned vacant lots in New York City into gardens.

I know that towns aren't like cities, but even in towns you can turn high schools into community learning centers. Towns without doctors can ask someone who knows first-aid to teach it to others. Someone who knows how to grow food could teach others how. Turn a car lot into a classroom and teach each other how to repair a car. The willingness to share is there. We never know how much we can teach and help each other unless we try. Before I close, I want to also know what's happening in your world. I want to know more about your ideas about the world from global warming to being a Catholic Worker, so I can write about it.

Thank you for your time,  
Norman Searah

P.S. In the next issue, I've asked my friend Victor, a neighbor and friend of the Catholic Worker to write this column. It's my way of letting people speak.



# Iowa Occupation Project Report



**DM 5 Acquitted!** (LtoR) Attorney Sally Frank, Kathleen McQuillen, Jeff Leys of VCNV, Dixie Webb, Chet Guinn, Brian Terrell & Elton Davis celebrate at a mid-trail rally at Chet's firehouse.



**19 Arrested in Cedar Falls!** July 6th group photo of the 19 folks about to occupy Senator's Grassley and Harkin's Cedar Rapids Offices. (See below.)

(This report was compiled by a number of friends.)

**ACQUITTAL!** DM Jury Hears Constitution, Finds Five IA Activists "Not Guilty" after Occupation of Senator Grassley's Office

Five Iowa peace activists who were arrested for trespassing in the Des Moines office of Iowa Senator Charles Grassley on February 26, 2007, were acquitted in Polk County District Court on July 11, bringing a happy ending to a three-day jury trial.

A six-citizen jury of their peers (five women and one man) returned a unanimous not guilty verdict on charges of trespassing by Des Moines activist Elton Davis, Rev. Chet Guinn, Kathleen McQuillen, Maloy IA CWer Brian Terrell, and Dixie Webb. The events of February 26 were in coordination with the Occupation Project, a national campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience to end the war in Iraq.

The "Des Moines Five" were found not guilty despite their admission that they had, in fact, refused an order by a U.S. Department of Homeland Security officer to leave Sen. Grassley's office. The five argued that they had a First Amendment Constitutional right to have their grievance heard by the Senator, and that the Senator and his staff had refused to hear their grievance. Federal charges of obstruction that were lodged against the activists had been previously dismissed by U.S. Judge Magistrate Celeste F. Bremer. "The Court finds that the ends of justice are served by granting the dismissal ..., and finds that such dismissals are in the besat interest of the public," Judge Bremer ruled on May 21.

After members of Sen. Grassley's office staff refused to make eye contact with the activists and ignored their presence in the office, Terrell, Guinn, and others reverently read aloud from

lists of names of American servicemen and servicewomen killed in Iraq and lists of the names of Iraqis killed since the beginning of the U.S. invasion of Iraq on March 20, 2003 and the subsequent occupation. "We brought a grievance," said Terrell, "we brought a list of names. Each name is a grievance that needed to be heard."

A Homeland Security officer testified that he entered the office and, calling on his training and experience as a paratrooper, loudly interrupted the reading of the names of the dead and summoned Des Moines Police Department officers to arrest the activists.

Jeff Leys of Voices for Creative Nonviolence in Chicago appeared on behalf of the defendants and was able to explain for the jury his research that indicates that the supplemental war funding bills passed by congress are not necessary to assure the well being and care of U.S. troops but only serve to prolong the war and to subsidize corporate profiteers.

First Amendment considered!

Rarely heard in a U.S. courtroom, the court took "judicial notice" of the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and Terrell was permitted to read the text of it for the jury: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." Terrell also was permitted to read a dictionary definition of the word "abridge"- "1. to reduce in scope, extent, etc.; shorten. 2. to shorten by lessening the number of words but keeping the main contents. 3. to lessen; curtail. 4. to deprive of (rights, privileges, etc.)."

While in trespass cases juries are

almost always ordered by the judge not to consider defendants' motives, Judge Odell McGee set a precedent, it is hoped, by instructing the jury they could only find that the defendants were "not justified in remaining on the property if the State proved... that the defendant(s) did not have a constitutional right to remain on the property."

Terrell and Davis represented themselves (pro se) in the courtroom. Guinn, McQuillen, and Webb were very ably represented by noted Des Moines civil and human rights attorney and National Lawyers Guild member Sally Frank. Frank is also a professor at Drake University Law School in Des Moines.

The court case had attracted national attention even before the not guilty verdict was returned. According to a July 11 article in The Hill, "The Senate passed a resolution Monday by unanimous consent granting two of Sen. Chuck Grassley's (R-Iowa) staffers legal representation in a case involving anti-war protesters in one of his Iowa offices."

The DM jury's not guilty verdict suggests that the jurors agreed that the peace and justice activists freedom of speech, their right to assemble, and their right to have their grievances heard by their elected representative had been abridged by their arrest and removal from Sen. Grassley's office. Acquittals in such cases in this country are rare and all but unheard of, but in the two weeks after the July 11 verdict in Iowa, juries in Washington, DC, and in Newark, NJ, have also found Occupation Project defendants not guilty.

The Cedar Rapids 11 Sentenced and 19 more arrested July 6<sup>th</sup> in occupations at Senators Grassley's and Harkin's Cedar Rapids Offices.

Eleven other IA Occupation Project protesters, including DMCW Frank Cordaro, who were arrested on Febru-

ary 26 in a coordinated "occupation" of Grassley's Cedar Rapids office and found guilty of trespass by a Linn County judge were sentenced on the morning of July 6 and ordered to pay fines and court costs totally \$281.80.

After the sentencing and in the afternoon, about 75 members of the IA Occupation Project and their friends returned to the Federal Building in Cedar Rapids. The activists were met by U.S. Marshals who told them that they would only be allowed into the building and Senator Grassley's office one at a time. When confronted with the first amendment protection of the "right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances," the marshals assured the protestors that their right to assemble would be respected but that they would need to assemble one at a time! The crowd gathered began to chant. "One person can't assemble!"

A standoff in the door of the Federal Building of more than an hour ensued before the marshals relented in their violation of the law and allowed the activists access to the building and the senator's office. Some of the group went to Grassley's office and others crossed the street and entered the office of Senator Tom Harkin's Cedar Rapids office housed in a Wells-Fargo bank. Both offices were occupied by protestors demanding the senators pledge to stop voting to fund the war in Iraq. By closing time at 5 PM no positive reply came from either senator and Cedar Rapids police arrested eight occupiers in Senator Harkin's office and eleven in Senator Grassley's, including Maloy CW BrainTerrell and DMCW newest community member Mona Shaw. Most of these plead not guilty to trespass charges in Linn County on July 20 and demanded a jury trial which is

## List of people arrested in Senators Grassley and Harkin's offices July 6th in Cedar Rapids Iowa :

### Grassley's Office:

DMCW Mona Shaw, 56 yrs; Lou Hellwig, Cedar Falls, 72 yrs; Ajax Robert Ehl, Iowa City, 37 yrs; Kathy Hall, Cedar Rapids, 63 yrs; Megan Felt, Iowa City, 20 yrs; Lee Mickey, North Liberty, 71 yrs; Nyssa Koons, Iowa City, 20 yrs; Brian Shearer, Iowa City, 22 yrs; David Goodner, Iowa City, 26 yrs; Gloria Williams, Iowa City, 57 yrs; Maloy CW Brian Terrell, 50 yrs; Renee Espe-land, Des Moines, 46 yrs

### Harkin's Office:

Michael Rack, Iowa City, 35 yrs; Lara Elborn, Iowa City, 20 yrs; Kerry Hofferber, Des Moines, 21 yrs; Chris Gaunt, Grinnell, 50 yrs; Rose Persaud, Iowa City, 47 yrs; Jamie Fredericksen, Iowa City, 37 yrs; Daisy Espino, Iowa City, 26 yrs; John Paul Hornbeck, Iowa City, 25 yrs

scheduled for October 29.

Since the Occupation Project was initiated in February, more than 350 citizens have been arrested around the country for occupying the offices of their representatives in Congress.

**Voices for Creative Nonviolence:** <http://vcnv.org/>  
**Iowa Occupation Project link:** [www.schoolformoralcourage.com/iowaoccupationproject.html](http://www.schoolformoralcourage.com/iowaoccupationproject.html)  
**The Occupation Project link:** [www.vcnv.org/project/the-occupation-project](http://www.vcnv.org/project/the-occupation-project)

## From page 1 SODaPOP

Otherwise, just let us know when you are coming and which candidates whose pro-war policies you and your community wish to expose and challenge.

### SODaPOP Demands

While the demands of the campaign are still being finalized, the initial concept is to occupy the campaign headquarters and offices of Presidential candidates who do not commit to:

- Complete withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan within 100 days of assuming the office of President of the United States.
- Complete halt to any and all military actions—including ground, air and naval—against Iraq and Iran.
- Full funding for the reconstruction of Iraq to repair the damage caused over these past 17 years of economic and military warfare that the U.S. and its allies waged against Iraq.
- Full funding for the Common Good in the U.S.—to rebuild our education and health care systems; to create jobs training programs for jobs that pay a living wage; to provide universal health care for all; to rebuild our country's inner cities and rural communities; and

to initiate a campaign on the scale of a new Tennessee Valley Authority and Rural Electrification Project of the Great Depression era to create affordable, safe and sustainable alternative forms of energy and energy consumption; and for other vital social programs.

• Full funding for the highest quality health care, education and jobs training benefits for veterans of our country's Armed Services.

For those Presidential candidates who currently hold a seat in the House or Senate, we set forth the following additional demands:

- Vote against any additional funding for the Iraq war other than those funds that are essential to fund the complete and immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.
- Publicly commit to oppose the use of U.S. military forces against Iran, Pakistan or opening any other front under the "war on terror."

These demands will be delivered to each of the candidates' headquarters in the weeks before the campaign and responses will be publicized.

Join us in Iowa at this critical time for weekly, if not daily, acts of nonviolent civil resistance / civil disobedience to seek a redirection of our country's poli-

cies and to bring about an end to the Iraq war. We travel to Washington, D.C. for national actions all the time. Now is the time to travel to Iowa, the center of our country's heartland, to seek an end to the Iraq war. Arrangements are being made now for hospitality and support in Des Moines and Iowa City and perhaps several other communities around the state for the campaign.

Following the Iowa caucus, let us bring SODaPOP to the campaign headquarters of candidates in our respective home states, with the next critical days of nonviolent resistance to anticipate February 5 (Super Duper Tuesday, when 20 states hold presidential primaries and caucuses).

Please be in contact with us about joining this critical campaign of nonviolent direct action, civil resistance and civil disobedience. To participate in SODaPOP, you may reach us via Voices for Creative Nonviolence at 773-878-3815 or via email at [info@vcnv.org](mailto:info@vcnv.org).

Additional information and resources will also be available on the Voiceswebsite: [www.vcnv.org](http://www.vcnv.org)



Ten Year Old Frankie Hughes—Youngest Occupier, Sept 21, 2007



## CO Springs St. Paddy's Day Seven Trial Ends with Hung Jury!

By Frank Cordaro

The long awaited trial of the seven peace marchers who were arrested during the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Colorado Springs took place in the city's municipal court on August 23 and 24, 2007. (see June 2007 v.p.) Originally charged with "failure to desist or disperse," the charge was changed to "obstructing a passage or assembly," a misdemeanor carrying a maximum penalty of \$500 and/or 90 days in jail.

Greg Walta, the Colorado American Civil Liberties Union attorney assigned to defend the seven peace marchers, embraced a defense strategy that strictly focused on the charge of "obstructing a passage or assembly" and refused to directly address the larger issues of freedom of speech and excessive force and police brutality that took place during the arrest. Greg's reasoning was simple and tailor-made for the local climate in Colorado Springs.

You would be hard-pressed to find a community in the United States that is more pro-law and order, pro-police, pro-war, pro-military, pro-USA and with a higher percentage of members of the Christian Right than the city of Colorado Springs. Ninety-nine out of a hundred times that a Colorado Springs jury is asked to choose between their police and a defendant, (despite the evidence and their own "lying eyes") they choose their police.

Narrowing the charge to "obstructing a passage or assembly" forced the jury to decide if the defendants knowingly and intentionally blocked the parade route rather than being forced to evaluate why the defendants were arrested in the first place. Greg rightly understood that if a narrative was painted that pitted the defendants against the police; the jury would side with the police regardless of the charges and the evidence. Greg's intent was to show that the problem emerged through the parade organizers' poor planning and negligence, which placed both the peace marchers and the police in an impossible situation.

The morning of the first day, a six-person jury was selected. Greg masterfully managed the dismissal of six jurors out of a pool of 30 for "cause" before using any defense strikes. The fact that so many jurors were dismissed for cause was also an indication of how difficult it was going to be to seat a fair and impartial jury. When the final selection was done, the jury included four women and two men; two of the women being African-Americans.



**Co Springs St. Paddy's Day Seven:** (LtoR) Molly Eaves, Eric Verlo, Elizabeth Fineron, Peter Sprunger-Froese, Betty Kerwin, Bill Durland and Frank Cordaro

The afternoon of the first day and the first half of the morning of the second day, the prosecution presented its case. It was here that Greg did his best work as he superbly exposed the holes and inconsistencies in the city's case. Witness after witness, most of them police officers, gave conflicting evidence and testimony. The biggest asset for the defense during this period of the trial was the photographs that documented what actually took place. Though there was no mention of police brutality, anyone looking at the photos could not miss it. The photos also proved that after the peace marchers were ordered to move to the left side of the road, at no time was the parade blocked or obstructed in any way.

Ironically, the most damaging testimony for the city came from the parade organizer and director John O'Donnell. O'Donnell said that he was concerned that the peace-marchers' presence threatened public safety because he believed that their message would result in physical retaliation by parade spectators. He also testified that parade policy prohibits "social issues," and that the peace marchers' peace message violated this policy. O'Donnell's claims ignored the fact that the same bookstore that we marched with this year had marched for peace with the Bookmobile in the 2006 parade without incident. This

also revealed his selective enforcement of the policy since he had allowed entrees from all four military branches, military auxiliary organizations, youth military cadet groups, Democratic and Republican political office holders and the local Hooters Restaurant!

Court testimony also refuted other fallacious statements made by O'Donnell. In a guest editorial in the local newspaper a week after the parade, O'Donnell had written that 45 protesters jumped out of the crowd and joined the book store entree after the parade began. Not one of the city's witnesses testified to seeing this. It was proven that all of the peace marchers had assembled with the Bookmobile in the staging area and were cleared by the parade's staging-area marshal to be part of the parade. Not only was it shown that O'Donnell had executed poor planning and negligent direction of his parade, he was exposed in a public lie about the peace marchers.

When the time came for the defense to present its case, Greg began by calling three witnesses to the parade who provided testimony that helped discredit witness testimony and other evidence that had been presented by the prosecution. Then, in a surprise move, he called only one of the defendants, Liz Fineron, to the stand. Liz, a 65-year-old retired teacher, was dragged across the pavement by two

police officers and suffered serious skin burns and abrasions from the dragging. Left in a bleeding and injured heap on the side of the road, Liz was not initially arrested when other peace-marchers were. Disturbing photos of Liz being dragged and her ensuing injuries resulted in widespread news coverage in the parade's aftermath.

The police officer who dragged Liz across the pavement testified that Liz sat down in the street and refused to move. This officer claimed that it was only after she was asked to move by the police and warned that she would be arrested if she did not move that two officers picked Liz up under her shoulders and carried her off the parade route. The officer also suggested that Liz caused her own injuries by going limp while she was being carried.

The first thing Greg did when Liz took the stand was show the video clips of Liz's arrest to the jury. The video showed clearly that Liz was standing when she was grabbed by the two officers. It also showed that it was the rapid speed with which she was grabbed and dragged that caused her to lose her footing, and that the officers continued to drag her without any pause or opportunity that would have allowed her to regain her stand.

Then Greg asked Liz to tell the jury

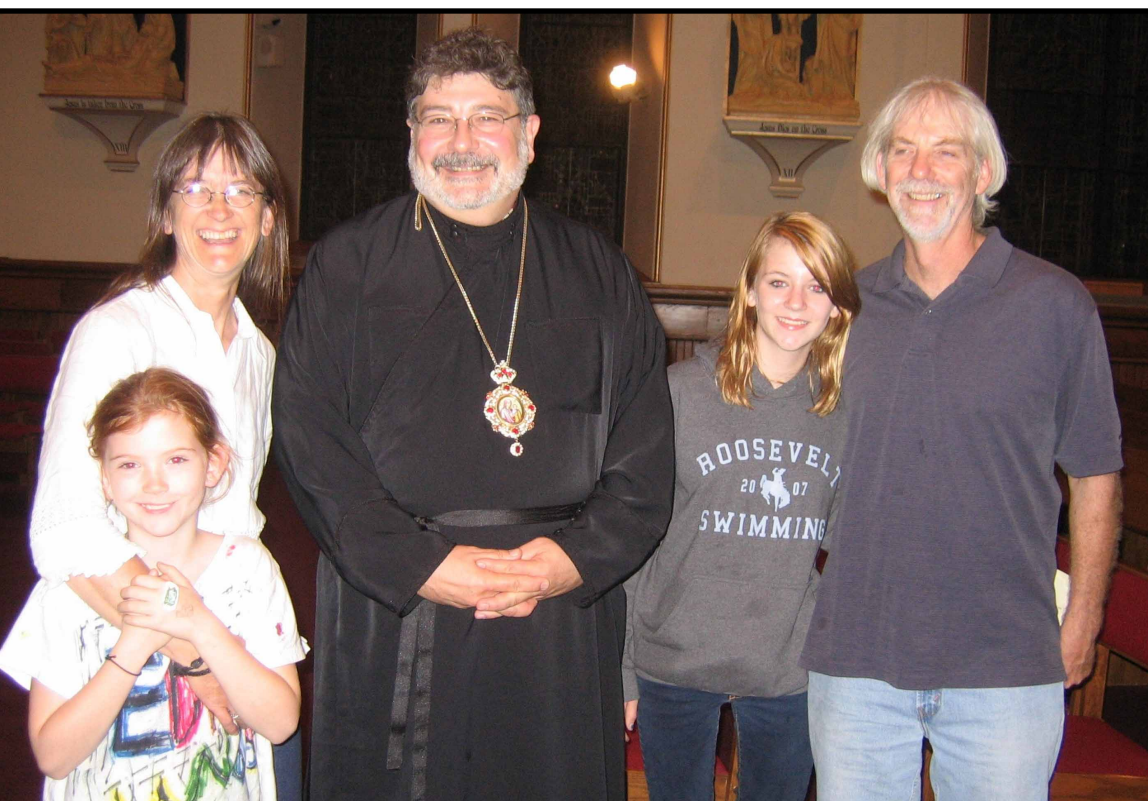
her medical condition, Liz disclosed that she had had open heart surgery, is diabetic, suffers from rheumatic arthritis, had both knees and hips replaced, has balance issues, takes several prescription drugs, and walks only with a cane. She explained that it was for these reason she chose to ride in the Bookmobile instead of walking with the rest of the peace marchers. Greg finally asked Liz if she could have sat down in the road that day had she wanted. She said, "No, I could not keep my balance. I would fall flat on my face."

Following Liz's testimony, the defense rested its case. Closing statements were made, and the case went to the jury about 2:30 p.m. of the second day. Two and a half hours later the jury announced it could not reach a verdict. While we defendants would have preferred a not guilty verdict, a hung jury is much better than a guilty verdict. The fact that there was a division within the six-person jury panel speaks volumes about how divided Colorado Springs is regarding the issues of peace and the war in Iraq. It was amazing to me that several members of our jury were willing to buck the militaristic, nationalistic "pro war" culture of Colorado Springs, put aside their cultural biases and see the facts of our case without prejudice and not be persuaded to change their minds by their fellow jurors. Though we do not know which jurors sided with the defendants I can't help thinking our two African American jurors may have helped hang the jury in our favor. African American's are more likely to recognize police brutality when they see it. Even though police brutality was never mentioned, the photos and the video evidence made the brutality quite clear.

The City of Colorado Springs now must decide whether or not to try this case again. As we go to press with the September issue of the *via pacis* we still do not know what the city's decision will be. Our attorney Greg Walta expressed it best in the Colorado Springs Gazette newspaper the day after the trial:

"The city is going to have to decide if they want this bad publicity to continue... the case never should have been brought to trial. They were afraid someone would throw a beer bottle at them. In most places, if someone throws a beer bottle at a peace marcher, they arrest the thrower ... Here, if you're afraid someone will throw a beer bottle at a marcher, we arrest the peace marcher. This is not how America is supposed to work."

For updates and access to photos, videos and articles related to the Colorado Springs St Patrick's Day Parade Seven, go to: [www.csaction.org/StPatsDay/31707.html](http://www.csaction.org/StPatsDay/31707.html)



**Romanian Catholic Bishop Michael Botean and the Espeland-Hughes family:** (LtoR) Renee, Frankie, Bishop Botean, Reetzi and Dan at St Ambrose Cathedral Friday, Sept 21. Bishop Botean is an outspoken critic of the war in Iraq among the US Catholic hierarchy. He wrote in a March 2003 pastoral letter, "Beyond a reasonable doubt this war is morally incompatible with the Person and Way of Jesus Christ ... With moral certainty I say to you it does not meet even the minimal standards of the Catholic just war theory." The Bishop was in DM at the invitation of Catholic Peace Ministry and talked at the Cathedral the same day that Renee, Reetzi and Frankie were arrested for occupying Senator Grassley's DM Office. Dan served as his family support person during the occupation.

## State Wide WAR MEMORIAL SERVICE: to honor the dead of the Iraq War and to speak for Peace Now!

**Date: Saturday, October 27, 2007**

**Time: 4:00PM (arrive early)**

**Place: Starting place - Nollen Plaza, 3rd & Locust St. DM IA**

### Schedule of Events

- 4:30: Nollen Plaza -Reading of the names of Iowans and Iraqi civilians who have died.
- 5:00: Procession of 50 flag draped coffins leave Nollen Plaza for the Federal Building and on to the Capitol Building.
  - 6:00: Speakers & Music at Capitol Mall
  - 7:00: Candlelight Ceremony at Capitol Mall
  - 7:30: Close

Join us at Nollen Plaza for a very special memorial to honor all who have lost their lives in Iraq. Join us for a procession led by drum and bugle and 50 flag draped caskets that will march from Nollen Plaza to, the Federal Building and on to the Capitol Mall for a special program and candlelight ceremony calling for peace and an end to the war.

Many Iowa Peace groups are co-sponsoring this event, including the DMCW and Catholic Peace Ministry. Scheduled speakers include DMCW Frank Cordaro and CPM board member Renee Espland.

Contact: Vern Naffier, Dir.  
Progressive Coalition of Central Iowa (PCCI)  
[www.iowaprogressives.org](http://www.iowaprogressives.org)  
Ph: 515-964-1353  
Email: [joycevern@juno.com](mailto:joycevern@juno.com)



## How far would you walk to feed your family?



Migrant Resource Center, Agua Prieta, Mexico: (LtoR) Fran Fuller, Rev. Angel, Rob and Juan

By Fran Fuller

Since 1995, the remains of more than 4,200 border crossers have been recovered along the US-Mexico border. Their deaths are a result of a failed border enforcement strategy that knowingly channels migrants through remote and dangerous desert. In 2006 alone, more than 205 migrants died along the border between Arizona and Sonora. Most are poor, working people, displaced by unfair trade and economic arrangements, seeking to improve life for themselves and their families.

Most of us unknowingly support illegal immigration every day. Every time we buy fruits and vegetables at the grocery store. Every time we stay in a motel. Every time we eat Tyson chicken or eat at restaurants. Every time we walk into a building that has been built in the last ten years. Every time we patronize a business that uses a landscaping service or janitorial service, we support illegal immigration.

Last June I traveled to Tucson to join the No More Deaths group in their work in Arizona and Mexico. It was an exhausting yet highly rewarding trip. Rev. John Fife, founder of the Sanctuary Movement in the 80's, also founded No More Deaths.

This organization was awarded the Oscar Romero Award for Human Rights by the Rothko Chapel. This

prestigious award further highlights the fact that what is happening on the border is a human rights travesty. No More Deaths calls upon the US to change its immigration and border policies to protect the rights of workers, respect the dignity of migrants, and help families re-unite and stay together. No More Deaths demands safe, legal and dignified avenues for people to cross the international boundary, and opposes the fundamentally flawed approach of border militarization.

I spent the first week at the Migrant Resource Center in Agua Prieta, Mexico. The Center is just a few feet from the Border Patrol (BP) center where deported Mexicans are released from custody and it is just across the border from Douglas, AZ, one of the largest border crossing facilities in the world. I had a room in Douglas at a house which also serves as the office space for a group called Frontera de Cristo.

The Migrant Center is one of their ministries along with *Just Coffee*, promoting fair trade coffee from Chiapas, and several other humanitarian campaigns.

The locals refer to Douglas as a militarized town. BP agents are a very visible presence. They drive around the town of 15,000 in their SUVs hauling trailers carrying various off-the-

road vehicles as a display of power. Being a BP agent is by far the best paying job in town. With nothing more than a high school education, starting pay is \$40,000.

Most migrants are released hungry and thirsty with no idea of where they are. Their suffering does not end when they are pulled out of the desert. Sometimes they've been given crackers and water by the BP but no meals are served. We welcome them to the Center and offer water, coffee, burritos and a place to relax. Many folks are willing to talk about their situation. Some are ready to go home while others will regroup and try to cross again. Information is provided about where to get meals and other services.

Approximately 100 people a day come to the Center. Migrants from Central America are not released here but returned to their own countries. The government does not prosecute deported Mexicans the first ten times they are caught. The number crossing is just too great.

Another important purpose of the Center is to document abuses by the BP, also known as the Migra. Vast numbers of migrants encountered at the Center have been denied food and water, separated from their families, deported at night, denied medical care, and/or been physically, emotionally

and sexually assaulted.

Most people were obviously tired but I was surprised to see smiles and laughter. Most still had hope and weren't completely beaten down. It is not an easy thing for them to decide to return home. No one wants to be seen as a failure by their families. A lot of money is sent to Mexico by those who have successfully crossed into the US and the condition of those families in Mexico is greatly improved. So many people keep trying to cross hoping to help their loved ones.

I participated in two vigils along the border. One was a prayer gathering at the border wall in Douglas, AZ, where a memorial cross had been attached to the wall. The other took place along the street leading to the border crossing. They had white wooden crosses bearing the names of those who died in the desert in that county. Each name was called out and the response by the vigilers was "¡Presenté!". Then each cross was set down in the street leaning up against the curb. The crosses stretched for several blocks. It was a sobering picture to see so many.

My second week with No More Deaths was spent at the Aravaca Desert Camp in AZ. It is located on land owned by Byrd Baylor. She is an author of children's books and two have been awarded the Caldecott Award. She has been helping migrants for many years and lives off the grid. There were eight people in our group. Some of us slept in tents and others slept on cots under the stars. A small camper served as a kitchen. Shower and toilets were rustic camp style.

Each day was around 100 degrees but thankfully nights were very cool. Everyone was up at 5 AM for a quick cup of coffee and bowl of cereal. We were in the truck by 6 AM to head out to one of the migrant trails looking for those in distress. We took along 5-6 gallons of water and each of us filled a backpack with small water bottles and food packs. After parking the truck, we walked 3-4 miles each trip. Migrants have left well worn trails on their journeys and we followed these looking for fresh tracks. As we walked, we called out, "¡Hola, amigos. Somos voluntarios de la iglesia. Tenemos agua y comida y ayuda medica." (Hello, friends. We are church volunteers. We have water, food and medical help.)

The migrants travel mainly at night and rest during the day. Their resting places are obvious because of empty water bottles, worn out shoes and various other items left behind. Frequently, groups of migrants get separated because some are unable to keep up due to injuries or other health rea-

sons.

When we saw fresh foot tracks, we would leave a gallon or two of water and record the date and location on the bottle. This information was also recorded in a daily log book so that it could be determined which trails were being used. A couple of days after leaving the water, we would go back to that trail and usually found the empty bottle.

If a migrant ran out of water, he would in desperation fill his water bottle with water from a cattle tank. This water is filthy and full of viruses leading to diarrhea, speedy dehydration and death. When we would find bottles with this scummy water, we would dump them out to prevent someone else from drinking it.

After our morning walk, we returned to camp for lunch and a rest before repeating this whole process at 3 PM. The only thing breaking the peace and quiet of the desert camp were fighter jets frequently training overhead. Everyone was ready for bed by 8 or 9. These trails were often very rocky and hilly, not a nice walk in the park. The monsoon season had not yet started which meant no mosquitoes!

The border patrol has a multitude of cameras and they also have buried wires which are pressure sensitive. Since some of the area has free range cattle, the BP doesn't respond every time these wires are set off. However, when our group had more than 3 or so people, we would trigger the wires. One day when we had 6 in our group, we were surprised by a low flying helicopter that came up over a hill heading straight for us. It circled our group once and apparently seeing who we were, took off. We all wore the No More Deaths green cross badge on our shirts for identification.

How far would you travel to feed your family? This question was on my mind as I pondered the journey these men, women and children were willing to make. I found the walks exhausting even though I started out well rested and fed and with a good pair of walking shoes. Most migrants have none of these advantages.

Send an email to [immigrationiowa@gmail.com](mailto:immigrationiowa@gmail.com) if you would like to sign up for three different listserves for current information on immigrant reform events, legislation, discussions, etc.

For more information check out:

**No More Deaths**  
[www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org)  
**Frontera de Cristo**  
[www.fronteradecristo.org](http://www.fronteradecristo.org)

## Chiapas Project Report

(Richard Flamer is a former DMCW who relocated to Chiapas, Mexico and is starting a Catholic Worker community in San Cristobal de las Casas.)

Dear friends,

Once again I have been derelict in getting this report out- lots has gone on, with more to come.

Our work at "Casa de Camillo Torres" (our little Catholic Worker Farm) has continued with its ups and downs. We occasionally take in passing migrants for a day or two but we are facing big problems if we are caught by the authorities (i.e. immigration.) A priest in Ixtepec, Oaxaca (a train stop on the way North where many Central Americans get off- the ones riding the rails) was arrested and is currently in jail for providing food and a room for eight Guatemalans. Mexico has criminalized undocumented people so it's now a crime to aid and abet those folks.

At the farm we have finished the outside and much of the inside of the woodshop. We are having troubles in getting a transformer near us so we still don't have electrical power except for the occasional use of our generator to make concrete block.

Araceli has been a great force these

last few months with her work with the women and the local community (Rancho Santiago.) We have been working with the teachers in the elementary school located just outside our gate providing maintenance and starting to build some desks and benches. The big issue facing the school this year is a cutback in funding the food program which gives the 50 plus students a meal each morning (cooked by the mothers.) We are trying to work out a program using our rabbits and eggs from local growers to provide meat, eggs and milk to supplement what is cooked (beans and tortillas.)

On my last trip to the U.S. I managed to meet and stay with Jim Groff, his wife Pat and their son Chris to work further on the Goat Project. We are in a poor area in Mexico that is mostly under quarantine for inadequate care for goats so we need to have everything ready for them in order to bring them into the region. Specifically, we need two corrals (one for the male, the other for the females and kids) a good warm barn with a cement floor and running water.) We have been working on the water situation and now just need to dig a trench to run a water line closer to the animals (instead of carrying buckets of water

100 yards), start digging fence post holes, buy the fencing, and build the barn, a mere \$6500. U.S. will get done what we need.

We had various visitors these last few months, most of whom were wonderful and very helpful. Terry McNamee along with Caroline, Finn

and Ghana came from the St. Louis Catholic Worker. Jorj Arceaga from

Continued on page 7



Richard Flamer and retired Bishop Don Samuel Ruiz Garcia on bishop's return visit to his beloved diocese.



# Hiroshima & Nagasaki Remembered at STRATCom & US Military Space Commands



Offutt Security greets Hiroshima Nagasaki Vigilers on August 9th on the line at closing services.

By Frank Cordaro

This year's Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker's annual August 6-9 Vigil at the gates of Offutt AFB, home of the Strategic Nuclear (StratCom) and the US Military Space Commands, was sustained by a few noble souls throughout the three-and-a-half day period. It was not until the last day that our numbers reached the double digit mark. Despite our small numbers, our presence at the main gate of the US military base (whose current mission and purpose has its historical and spiritual beginnings in the USA atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan on Aug 6 and 9, 1945) is still a much needed and timely effort both for the vigilers and for the Offutt AFB community.

The benefit was direct and personal for those of us who vigiled. Taking time from our everyday, busy lives and holding in prayer our hope and desire for peace; we commemorated the anniversary of the USA atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while contemplating the work and mission of the god-awful Offutt

Commands and the challenges they pose to all life on our planet and the demonic claim they hold on the soul and spirit of our nation. The vigil enriched each of us who came and stood in prayerful silence at the portal of this US Military base.

The benefit for the Offutt AFB community was not so readily received or understood but no less important. By far the majority of people who passed our vigil in their cars gave no reaction at all. Yet many did, and those who did were split 50/50 between positive and negative responses. The favorite positive reaction was the peace symbol. The favorite negative reaction was the "middle finger."

The most common negative verbal response was, "What about Pearl Harbor?"

At one point I shouted back, "Yeah, what about Pearl Harbor?"

So many Americans believe the sheer mention of Pearl Harbor validates the license for the USA to have done anything it wanted to do to Japan. Truth is there is no comparison between Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and the USA bombing

of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Pearl Harbor was a military target with fewer than 3,000 US military personnel killed. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were civilian cities with more than 200,000 non combatants killed. Besides, Japan had good reason to feel threatened by the USA in 1941, reasons that were more substantial and verifiable than President Bush's reasons for preemptively invading Iraq in 2003. If George Bush was justified in invading Iraq in 2003, Japan was equally justified in attacking Pearl Harbor in 1941. Even had the A-bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought an end to WWII (They did not. Japan was already defeated by Aug of 1945.), the two bombings were neither morally nor legally justified.

If Americans are this far from admitting the truth about our deeds of WWII, how much further are we from seeing the truths of our deeds today in Iraq? God help us! And, all the more reason for our continued yearly August 6-9 vigils at Offutt Air Force Base.

On August 9th, the last day of our vigil, there were 15 of us in atten-

dance on the drive leading up to the main Offutt gate for our closing ceremony. The base security closed-off the outgoing traffic lane to allow us to do our service of remembrance. Careful not to cross the white property line painted across the drive, we began our service with a song followed by a reading of Luke's version of the Transfiguration Story.

We concluded with a reading of Thomas Merton's "Original Child Bomb." It's a powerful poem by Merton that leaves no doubt about the criminal act on the part of the USA for the Atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Stringing together a collection of facts surrounding the events leading up to and including the actual August 6-9 bombings, Merton documents the inhumanity, the insanity and the complete avoidability of what we did to Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan that fateful August of 1945.

No one was up for crossing the line this year. Hopefully, next time there will be. The entire ceremony lasted about a half hour. No one left unmoved.

## Invite to the 29th Annual Feast of the Holy Innocents Retreat, Witness & Line Crossing at STRATCOM Headquarters & US MILITARY SPACE COMMAND, OFFUTT AFB

The DM and Omaha CW communities invite you to make your Christmas celebration complete and join us as we explore the often ignored and deeper meaning of the season. Using the Gospel of Matthew's infant narrative, we will examine the links between King Herod, his killing of the innocent children in Bethlehem and the murderous deeds of US backed modern day Herods. The Herods of Jesus' day were backed up by the Legions of the Roman armies. Our modern day Herods are backed up by the USA Global Military presence and Offutt's Nuclear and Space Commands.

This year's retreat takes place in the basement of St John's Church on Creighton University campus at 2500 California Plaza, Omaha NE. The Retreat begins at 7:00 pm Wednesday, Dec. 26th and ends Friday at 1 p.m. with a Vigil and Line Crossing at Offutt AFB Thursday Dec. 28th.

For more information contact:  
Frank Cordaro, Berrigan CW House  
713 Indiana St., Des Moines IA 50314  
Ph (515) 282-4781 Cell (515) 490 2490 Or  
Jerry Ebner, Omaha CW  
1104 N 24<sup>th</sup> St, Omaha NE 68102  
Ph (402) 502- 5887

because she was so awful. She reminded me of the protagonist in a work by Henry Miller called "A Devil in Paradise."

We have truly been blessed by the visitors and their great help along the way. Additionally, we got a gift of \$4,000. from an anonymous donor. Being of sound mind and body I spent most of it. That is, I gave Araceli half to run the house here and for her upcoming trip to London (she has been asked to accompany Joshua, a former charge from her time as a Nanny.) The other monies were spent on building and housing the folks who come down the road.

I often feel overwhelmed by the burdens God has given me and my wife. Yet, we continue in faith and hope to try and live the way of disci-

ples. We aren't very good at it, but as our beloved Pope John XXIII said before the opening of his conference on Vatican II- "Ubi deficiunt equi, trottant aselli"- When horses are unavailable, asses come in handy.

Love and Peace to all, Richard Flamer, The Chiapas Project E-mails

flamerrichard@hotmail.com

Shared Web page:

Www.bishopruizproject.org/

P.S. Holy Family Church at 1715 Izard Street, Omaha Nebraska, 68102 is accepting checks made out to the Chiapas Project from any of you folks who want to help us live the Gospels in the Catholic Worker tradition...

## Keep Space for Peace Week - Omaha Events International Days of Protest to Stop the Militarization of Space

October 4-13, 2007

Each year the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space sponsors a Keep Space for Peace Week in October. Local peace communities who have on going campaigns against space war related industries and military facilities from all over the world participate in this week of protest. <http://www.space4peace.org>

For the second year in a row the DM and Omaha CWers and the NE. For Peace [www.nebraskansforpeace.org](http://www.nebraskansforpeace.org) have participated in the Global Keep Space for Peace Week by focusing our protest on a yearly Strategic Space & Defense Conference held at the Qwest Center in Omaha NE. This conference is hosted by the cooperate suppliers of weapons and space technologies for the STRATCom and Military Space Commands at Offutt AFB, a sort of "Space Weapons Bazaar".

**Friday Oct 5th**

This year's Keep Space for Peace Week in Omaha events start Friday Oct 5th with a joint presentation by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton & Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the Globe Network at Creighton University in the Rigge Science Building, Room #120, entitled, "StratCom's Role in Militarization of Space: An Update and Catholic Response" at 3:30 pm. For more info on this event contact Jerry Ebner, Omaha CW at (402) 502-5887 or e-mail at

<omahacw@hotmail.com>

**Saturday Oct 6th**

The annual all day Nebraskans for Peace Conference will take place in Omaha and this year's key note address will be a repeat of the joint presentation by Bishop Gumbleton & Bruce Gagnon entitled, "StratCom's Role in Militarization of Space: An Update and Christian Response".

Also at this conference there will be a workshop offered entitled, "StratCom, Aerospace Corporations and the Omaha Economy A Discussion Facilitated by Carol Umer, Chair of "DISARM" (Dismantle the War Economy Project) of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom" This is a first class conference, with workshops on many current and vital issues, well worth attending. For more info contact Nebraskans for Peace at (402) 475.4620 or (402)453-077

[www.nebraskansforpeace.org/](http://www.nebraskansforpeace.org/)

**Tuesday Oct 9th**

4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.: A legal nonviolent public protest at the opening ceremony and reception for the Strategic Space & Defense 2007 Conference outside the Qwest Center. Members of the public are encourage to participate.

**Wednesday Oct 10th**

Mid morning: Nonviolent civil disobedience outside the Qwest Center. Anyone wishing to be part of this nonviolent civil disobedience action must contact the DM or Omaha Catholic Workers beforehand and be in Omaha by Tuesday Oct 9th for the nonviolence and planning sessions. For more info contact: Jerry Ebner, Omaha CW at (402) 502-5887

<omahacw@hotmail.com> or Frank

Cordaro, DMCW at (515) 282 4781

frank.cordaro@gmail.com

4:30 p.m.: Legal nonviolent weekly vigil outside StratCom's Global Innovation and Strategy Center at 6825 Pine Street on the UNO campus. Supporters are encouraged and welcome.

**Thursday, October 11**

7:30 a.m to 9 a.m.: Legal nonviolent public protest outside the Qwest Center to protest the final day of the "Strategic Space and Defense 2007 Conference" from 7:30-9:00, with banners, signs and speakers.

(afternoon time to be determined) Legal nonviolent protest at the Northrup Grumman facility in Bellevue, Nebraska. A leading aerospace contractor and Pentagon client, Northrup Grumman is one of the top three corporate sponsors of this year's Strategic Space and Defense 2007 Conference.



Finn, the son of Terry and Caroline— our 2nd youngest visitor.

### From page 6 Chiapas Project

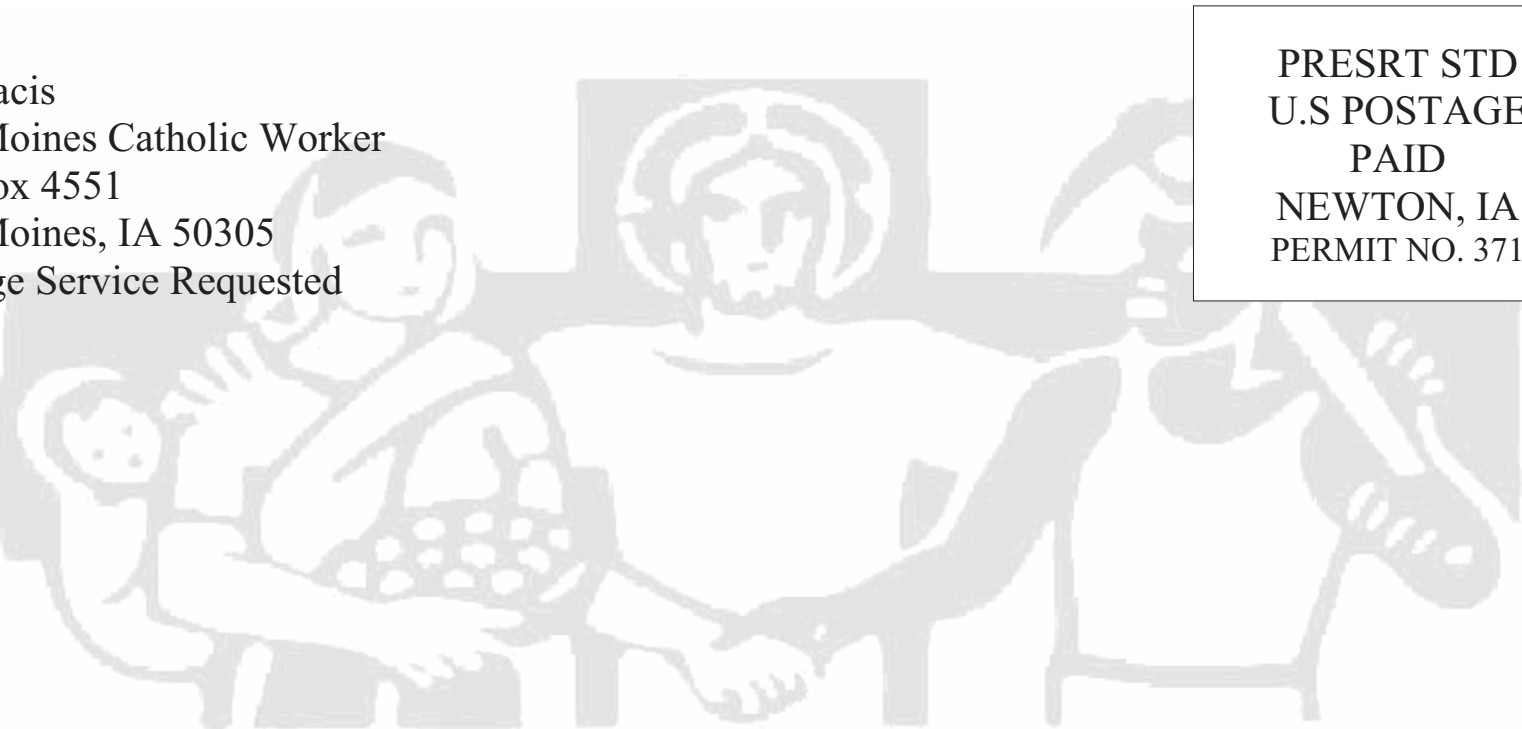
the Dubuque Catholic Worker rode down with me from San Antonio. Dan and his family (friends of Terry and Caroline) came down for a brief stint. Christina came from New Mex-

ico to help us set up the negative scanner and started scanning some of the 80,000 slides I have from my time in Central America. Debbie came along with Garret, her son, for a brief stay. Debbie's last name escapes me now. Then, there was a Croat woman whose name escapes me also



Via Pacis  
Des Moines Catholic Worker  
PO Box 4551  
Des Moines, IA 50305  
Change Service Requested

PRESRT STD  
U.S POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEWTON, IA  
PERMIT NO. 371



September 2007

Worker  
Wishlist

Prayers  
Without them,  
Nothing else  
Matters !  
(Really)

Requesting  
your help...

**Volunteers**  
Individuals and work crews  
need for hospitality (serving  
food, clean-up), general house  
cleaning and / or maintenance.  
Inside and outside

**Renovation**  
We need do-it-yourselfers,  
carpenters, plumbers  
and electricians  
to help with:

Dingman House:  
All New Kitchen  
Fire Escape

Lazarus House:  
New Roof  
Fire Escape

Ligutti House:  
Fire Escape

There is always some-  
thing to repair or fix with  
four old houses—bring  
your tools and pick a pro-  
ject!

*Peace  
and  
Justice  
books  
for the  
Berrigan  
House  
Library*

**Pantry &  
Dairy**

Cereal, Coffee  
Canned Fruit  
Vegetables  
Beans  
Soups & Stews  
Sugar,Coffee &  
Creamer  
Juices & Milk  
Cheese, Butter &  
Eggs

**Toiletries**

Fem. Pads  
Tampons  
Disp. Razors  
Shaving Cream  
Shampoo  
Body Lotion  
Deodorant  
Toothbrushes  
Toothpaste

**Cleaning  
Supplies**

Bleach  
Dish Soap  
Murphy’s Oil  
Soap  
Pinesol  
Toilet Cleaners  
Paper Towels  
Brushes  
Sponges

**Over the  
Counter  
Medicines**  
Tylenol  
Ibuprofen  
Multiple  
Vitamins  
Ointments

**Donations**  
Cash donations are  
important to pay  
taxes, utilities,  
supplies and  
regular maintenance.

**Winter’s Coming?**  
We will need blankets, cloves, scarves and hats. Winter clothing  
and shoes, socks and underwear!